New Global Reuse Survey Reveals Industry Momentum—But Calls for Urgent Policy Action to Cut Plastic Waste

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REUSE Foundation calls for action to unlock the potential of reuse as plastic waste continues to surge worldwide

London, 28 November 2025:

A landmark new report from REUSE Foundation, based on the first global survey of reuse-focused businesses, reveals a vibrant industry driven by entrepreneurs determined to stop plastic waste at source, yet struggling against structural barriers that prevent reuse solutions from scaling.

The *2025 Reuse Practitioners Survey* gathered responses from 66 companies across 25 countries, offering the clearest picture to date of what is happening on the front lines of reuse. The findings show that while the sector is rich with innovation and momentum, companies lack the policy backing, visibility, and financial support necessary to replace single-use plastics at meaningful scale.

Key Findings: A Growing Industry Held Back by Structural Impediments

1. Reuse businesses are innovating worldwide, but lack political and financial backing

- Many report that regulatory processes for reuse are confusing, slow, or non-existent.
- **70%**
  of respondents say stronger **policy support** would be a critical growth driver.

"Policy is lacking. Reuse is the best thing for the environment but we don't get any tax or other benefit from doing it—and nor do consumers." — Refill from home provider, UK

2. Reuse solutions are diverse, innovative, and expanding

Respondents operate across household care, personal care, beauty, reverse logistics, refill technologies, tracking systems, and return-from-home solutions.

- **Household care** is the most common category (61%).
- Many companies are in their **growth** or **established** phase, signalling an industry moving beyond experimentation.

3. Collaboration seen as key to growth

- **77%**
  of companies want to collaborate with other reuse providers.
- **56%**
  support the creation of a reuse impact alliance or knowledge sharing platform.

"Big companies have run pilots in some countries but don't share the results, so we keep making the same mistakes. We should share lessons" — Reuse consultant, South Africa

4. Entrepreneurs are motivated by a shared purpose: stop plastic waste at the source

Interviews reveal that most practitioners are driven by both environmental mission and emerging commercial opportunities. Many see reuse as a "massive potential" industry, but one that requires structural support to compete with entrenched single-use systems and the plastic waste they bring.

5. Incumbents with scaled linear supply chains and ingrained consumer habits impede reuse

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Major CPG incumbents operate large linear supply chains that deliver disposable packaging at very low cost. These systems externalise the true environmental costs of waste, making single-use appear cheaper than it really is. Decades of marketing and product design have conditioned consumers to expect disposability, making behaviour change slow even when motivation is high.

Reuse providers must compete with artificially low-priced single-use packaging and deeply ingrained consumer routines. While many consumers express interest in reuse, shifting established habits requires investment in education and takes time.

The findings show that **reuse businesses are demonstrating solutions, but the wider system is not set up to help them succeed.**

“Reuse is one of the most effective ways to cut plastic waste, but the businesses delivering these solutions are being left to do it alone. Reuse gets a fraction of the support given to recycling and single-use alternatives” said REUSE Foundation trustee, Roger Sharp. “These companies are solving the problem, and this industry is ready to scale. Now it needs governments and brands to step up.”

The findings will help to guide REUSE Foundation’s strategy and actions and inform new initiatives.

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About REUSE Foundation

REUSE Foundation is a UK charity focused on scaling pragmatic, impactful solutions that reduce reliance on single-use plastic. It works with reuse entrepreneurs, practitioners, and global experts to accelerate proven models that work for both people and the planet.

Its current programs include…

Sponsor a Village that aims to demonstrate reuse can work in the lowest income communities in India.

Bottles for Good that seeks to seed reuse habits in the UK by working with refill stores around the country to make available discounted refillable packaging.

Refill, Not Landfill!, a student/youth competition with a prize for the best social media posts that communicates why plastic recycling is failing, why reuse is the best option and inspires behaviour change.

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